

Point Three



The Toc H magazine
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10p



Point Three

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Letters, articles and news items are welcomed, and should be addressed to the Toc H Editorial Office, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6BT (Telephone: 0296 623911)

Opinions expressed (including the editorial) are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement.

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Toc H seeks to create friendship and understanding among people of all backgrounds and beliefs. Local group activities range from holidays for the handicapped and children's playschemes to arts festivals and even bird watching. Toc H is short for Talbot House – the soldiers' club in Belgium founded by the Reverend 'Tubby' Clayton in 1915. Today Toc H provides opportunities for people to test the relevance of practical Christianity and we welcome anyone who would like to give us a try.

Members accept a four fold commitment:

1. To build friendships across the barriers that divide man from man.
2. To give personal service.
3. To find their own convictions while always being willing to listen to the views of others.
4. To work for the Kingdom of God.

This magazine, which acts as a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world in which we live, takes its title from the third of these Four Points – to think fairly.

Cover Picture

HRH Princess Alexandra signing the Visitor's Book on her recent visit to Talbot House, Poperinge.

Editorial

PRUDENCE OR COWARDICE?

As I write this, the Prince and Princess of Wales are nearing the end of their Italian visit. A highly successful tour has been marred by the episode of the early morning Papal Mass. The Prince and Princess had hoped to attend a Mass in the Vatican, but were advised that it would be 'inappropriate' and they followed that advice, though clearly with regret. By the time this is printed there will doubtless have been millions of wiser words printed and spoken on the matter. No doubt lawyers will have discussed the 1701 Act of Settlement until every word is familiar. No doubt the historians will have shared the background to the Act. No doubt bigoted Protestant groups will have rejoiced over the outcome. No doubt many ordinary folk will be wondering, in some bafflement, exactly why two young Christians should not attend a service of Holy Communion, just because they will one day be the King and Queen of a particular Christian country. No doubt many sincere Christians will be doing their best to reconcile their own sorrow with the need to understand the reasons. All in all, it seems to have been a bad day for Christianity, and a good day for those who have a vested interest in maintaining the divisions and suspicions of the past.

It is, of course, important to take into account the historical reasons for the Act, and the clauses that insist that a Monarch is 'in communion with the Church of England'. When it was passed, it was a response to a situation in which the religious allegiance of a Monarch was a major political factor, and the change of such allegiance could plunge the nation into strife. It was no surprise that years of intolerance by both Roman Catholics and Protestants led to a law which did what it could to ensure no Roman Catholic could ever again be a Monarch in this country. While many of us will feel that that is so far gone as to be forgettable, it is important to remember that in some parts of the country, notably N Ireland, fears and suspicions do exist, and things look very different depending on where you were born and where you live.

The fact that there are still real fears and suspicions in some places does not, though, alter other facts. The fact is that the Monarch now has no real political clout, and a Monarch's religious stance is no longer the political issue it was. It is silly to suggest it is. Circumstances are fundamentally different from what they were in 1701. Indeed, they are very different from what they were even 25 years ago, before the Second Vatican Council. Even in Toc H we have felt the benefits of change. In the early days of Toc H most Roman Catholic priests would advise their flocks against taking any part in Toc H, in view of its Anglican origins and links. Today, thank God, there is no such pressure and we rejoice that the Movement has a leaven of Roman Catholics at many levels, not least my predecessor.

Even if one leaves aside the political question, it could be argued that the role of the Monarch as head of the Church of England is still very important. True or not, it is a strange situation in which the head of the Church may not engage in acts of reconciliation with other denominations, while everyone else in the Church, Archbishop or curate, ordained or lay, is free to do so. It seems a strange form of Christian leadership which is prevented from leading towards reconciliation and unity.

No doubt the Prince and Princess were strongly advised that it would be unwise for them to attend the Mass, and it is unfair to expect them to dismiss this advice. No doubt they were warned of the trouble that might result if the event went ahead; of the constitutional questions that might be raised; of the howl of protest that would surely come from such as the Revd Ian Paisley. There is no criticism of them for taking this advice seriously. What is needed, however, is advisers who have the courage to consider whether it is sometimes better in the long run to risk the trouble, and do what is right. Clearly the Archbishop of Canterbury felt that the gesture by the Prince and Princess was of value, and as far as we know did not disagree with it. He has himself been in the forefront of moves for reconciliation, and he was probably delighted that his future King and Queen wished to do what they could. It is a sad business that they were prevented from doing so by an Act of Parliament which is an antique irrelevance, and the threat of a lot of protest from a small minority.

Toc H en Talbot House Vieren 70e Verjaardag

POPERINGE. — *Het was in december 1915 dat Padre Philip (Tubby) Clayton in Poperinge Talbot House opende. Het was oorspronkelijk een klub voor alle militaire rangen, met slaapgelegenheid en mogelijkheid tot lezen, schrijven en mensen te ontmoeten. Het huis en de tuin van Talbot House verwierven al gauw een reputatie van gezellige informaliteit en vriendelijkheid. Deze omschrijving geldt nu nog.*

Zeventig jaar Talbot House: dat is de direkte aanleiding van het bezoek van Hare Koninklijke Hoogheid Prinses Alexandra van Kent. De prinses komt naar Poperinge, Ieper, Heuvelland en Brussel tijdens een driedaags bezoek aan ons land. Ze zal vergezeld zijn van haar echtgenoot Angus Ogilvy.

That was how the Poperinge local paper 'Het Wekelijks Nieuws' announced the visit of Princess Alexandra to the Old House in April. The Revd Colin Rudd, who was part of the British Delegation present on this occasion, shares his view of the very happy occasion.

This year has importance as an anniversary for Toc H chiefly because we remember that 70 years ago one man's vision came to life with the opening of Talbot House in Poperinge. In December 1915 he could have had no thought that in 1985 we would still remember his vision and courage, nor that a world-wide movement would continue to try to find contemporary expression of the spirit which had been found there.

Reading again of experiences of those days one is struck afresh by the impact of Talbot House, and the visitor is exposed to that impact still. Such was the experience of HRH Princess Alexandra when, on 22 April she visited the Old House. It was in the peace of the Upper Room, away from all the hub-bub which surrounds royal visits, that she was most aware of the special atmosphere which the house still has.

Her visit to Belgium had begun the day before when she attended Evensong at St George's, Ypres. The service was

followed by a reception and the Last Post at the Menin Gate. Sadly, she had to come without her husband, the Rt Hon Angus Ogilvy, who was too unwell to join her.

Monday morning began with a visit to the Pool of Peace, where the Princess planted two trees. From there she came to Talbot House, which had been cleaned and polished until it looked like a new pin! The garden, too, thanks to volunteers from the RAOC at Antwerp, had been restored to its former beauty.

From the moment of her arrival the Princess was clearly determined that her visit should be as informal as possible, and after being shown around the house by Belgian members of the Talbot House Association, she spent the rest of her visit talking to most of the 60 or 70 people present. The visit became delightfully informal, with conversation taking the place of speeches, and people meeting each other in friendship — a fitting celebration to mark our first 70 years.



Photo: Brighton & Hove Gazette & Herald

Ann Brown is a member of Brighton Branch and belongs to the group at John Howard House, Brighton, an annexe of the Putney Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables. Ann is a victim of multiple sclerosis and is only partially sighted but despite her illness she has recently done a sponsored swim of 30 lengths at the Prince Regent Swimming Pool in Brighton. £360 was raised and goes towards a new renal ward at Dulwich Hospital where Ann's brother was treated for a serious kidney disease.

An Investment for Charity?

Toc H is one of the participating charities in a new venture launched by the Charities Aid Foundation in conjunction with the Fidelity Unit Trust Group. Toc H supporters are invited to invest a minimum of £500 in a Unit Trust choosing one of the following options:

1. Allowing Toc H to benefit from the interest only.
2. Keeping the income but allowing Toc H to inherit the Capital and Gain.
3. Keeping the original Capital and receiving interest but allowing Toc H to inherit the Capital Gain only.

If this way to help the Movement is of interest, please write for further details from: Appeals Secretary, Toc H HQ, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

Round and about

Never a dull moment

Dot Turner, of Ipswich Branch, writes to tell us of an evening recently when members shared a personal experience. One member, Maureen Hadley, read the following:

'My first experience of handicapped children was with a physically and mentally handicapped child of nine who could not walk or talk. The project was held at a boarding school at Peaslake in Surrey. I was very ignorant about mentally handicapped children before looking after Tyrone and I used to think they were incapable of showing any life at all. I found Tyrone was something special. He showed all the emotions of anger, happiness and love.

'By Tuesday I knew what he enjoyed - I only had to look at his eyes. They used to light up and gleam when he liked what he saw - especially in the food line.

'There was never a dull moment. He was always laughing, especially when hitting people on the head with his toy crocodile which was his pride and joy. Putting him to bed was a struggle. He would put his arms into a lock and it took two people to unlock them to put his pyjamas on. He didn't like bed time!



'I also learned he liked music, even my singing. Many evenings I would sing to him until he went off to sleep. The last night putting him to bed wasn't easy, knowing I would have to give Tyrone back to his parents the next day. Then came Saturday mid-morning and his mother, father and brother came to collect him. I found it hard to give him back. I would like to have kept him but I knew in my heart I couldn't.

'That week I experienced a lot about myself that I didn't know before. I learnt that I was able to give love and affection which I have held back in the past and also that I was able to receive so much love back again. I realised Tyrone has a special place in Jesus' arms just as any handicapped person has.'

Bideford's LEPRa Effort

Beryl Hammond writes: *Weren't you all stirred to do more than send a cheque when LEPRa made it known that 15 million lepers suffer in the world today? We were. We did. We agreed with Celia Shepherd, SW Regional organiser for LEPRa to hold a Flag Day in March...*

'In February, Celia came to meet us and all who would help us including a member of the Town Council. It was a productive evening even though we froze in the Parish Church...

'Our Padre, Harry Gordon-Jones did invaluable work driving round the villages, dealing with posters (designed by a sign-writer, photostatted by lads in the Youth Training Scheme, where the headmaster put in a word for a bit of discount) delivering and retrieving collecting boxes...

'On Monday 25 March, our Chairman's daughter spoke for us on 'Devon Talk' and was very well received. Naturally, the 26th was wet! Even so our sellers smiled and raised over £260. On Saturday 30 March, we held our coffee morning helped by five girl guide 'waitresses'. What would we do without friends? Celia showed a film on the growth of leprosy and what LEPRa is doing about it. A member brought a huge basket of daffodils from her garden and made £5.40 selling them. Two 19 year olds collected twopennies with quoits etc...

'The evening brought a Charity Concert, honoured by the presence of the

Mayor and Mayoress. It was presented by our Minister, Rev Norman Skinner, who enthralled us with a programme of classical music played on various instruments, including a concertina. Celia showed her second film and the LEPRa display and two Toc H tables were there for the audience to see. All our efforts were centred in the Baptist Hall, Mill Street for which we paid a peppercorn rent. Indeed we feel we can never repay all the co-operation which gave us £325, enough to heal 30 sufferers from leprosy...

'Celia says that no-one else had done anything like it. She has inspired one town to copy us and she is booked to speak to a group in Bideford in the near future. This is the biggest thing we have done and £325 was beyond our wildest dreams. When God gives us a job to do He makes us work - then gives us a wonderful result. He has given us a cheap cure for leprosy - help us to use it to stamp out this awful disease.'

Festival Fund-Drive

A number of Branches have responded with enthusiasm to the challenge in February's *Point Three*. Tavistock is the first to have reported their results - a coffee evening and bring-and-buy sale, with various sideshows, which raised about £70 for the Fund and, John Drinkwater tells us, was a good social event with over 40 members and friends present.

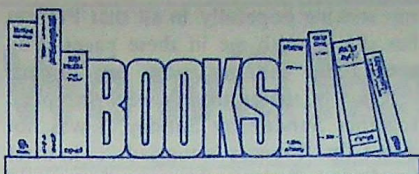
Branch life in Sheffield

Jean Stothard writes: *'We are not very often "in the news", so I feel that for once we should "blow our own trumpet".'*

'We are extremely active just now, and this year we raised enough money for approximately 30 lonely people to enjoy a Christmas dinner prepared by Church and Branch members on Christmas Day. Also, £50 was sent to LEPRa for their Jubilee Appeal and £50 to Peter East in Bangladesh. Our very own Pavilion Project has got underway (see article in this issue - Ed) and £50 from Branch Funds helped to pay for a day at the seaside for inner-city children. Proceeds from one of our many annual Jumble Sales provided a food and games party for handicapped children held in St Mary's Church.

'Branch members gave their time to these and many other events, and our hopes are high for spreading the Toc H light during the coming year.'





FACE TO FACE

by Frances Young with assistance from Arthur

FACE TO FACE is a moving account of a mother's lonely, inner struggles after her eldest son, Arthur, was born severely handicapped and brain damaged. It has been a struggle to fill 'an internal blank where God should have been', but 'the problem of God's reality was not first posed by the crisis of Arthur'. Each of the six chapters, and the prelude and finale, bring us face to face with one of

the strands in Frances Young's struggle and, wonderfully, in each strand after his birth you can feel the presence of Arthur. From time to time his presence is particularly felt when prose gives way to poetry. For example, after attending a carol service at a local convent with Arthur.

Mary, my child's broken.
Is yours broken too?
Crushed by affliction,
Hurt by rejection,
Disfigured, stricken,
Silent submission.

Mary, my heart's joyful.
Is yours joyful too?

I have my own consciousness of
Arthur's presence for, Sunday by Sunday,

for over 16 years now, I have worshipped in the same Methodist Church with Frances Young and her family. If I could not see them across the Church as we sat in our customary places (what creatures of habit we can become!!!) I knew they were there because I could hear Arthur's distinctive participation from time to time.

I must admit that Frances Young's theological texts like, for example, 'Can these dry bones live?' or her chapters in 'The Myth of God Incarnate' only succeed in making me angry at my ignorance and lack of theological understanding. Mine is a simple mind to which FACE TO FACE speaks loud and clear and yet, ultimately, it is a theological text. FACE TO FACE speaks to my humanity. It speaks to my

contd on p6/

The Cup that Cheers

The enclosed letter from one of the ladies who visits the Newport Friday Coffee Mornings helps to illustrate just how the 'Teasmade Coffee Morning' (Point Three, July 1984) has really proved to be a worthwhile project.

Mary Leech writes that a letter like this has helped to make their smiles even wider as they serve the coffee. The writer is of German nationality and came to this country in 1933.

'Just a few words to express my thanks for the help you have given me. My husband was very withdrawn and disinterested after a severe nervous breakdown. We are both comparative newcomers to this town and found it difficult to make new friends at this age. However, one day I spied a blackboard with the promise of a friendly reception. We made our way there and you surely lived up to your promise.'

'The kindly reception, the friendly and undemanding atmosphere that you create has been better than any medicine. On Thursdays I get the odd reminder not to forget our Coffee Morning. On Friday morning his coat and

scarf are ready long before 5 am! It is a real pleasure to see him bright and cheerful afterwards. I am sure I need not tell you how much easier and more pleasant that makes life for me.'



Photo: Ana Cecilia Gonzalez-Vigil



Photo: Jeffrey F. Morgan

Members and friends at the Newport Coffee Mornings.

Concerts in Leeds

Sydney Carter writes to tell us about the main job of Wortley-de-Leeds (M) Branch. Twice a year they provide a free tea and concert in a local Community Centre for any person of pensionable age who lives in the parish. The concert is provided by one of a few organisations who do such work for charity. The cost (approximately £150 per event) they meet by holding Mini Markets outside their premises when they sell goods given to them from all sources. The average profit for a couple of hours on a Saturday morning is in the region of £60. They usually hold them monthly during the summer months and in 1984 raised £257.84. They keep a list of all the old people and each gets a Christmas card and also a birthday card. Many of them live alone and the concerts are greatly looked forward to as they can meet old friends and have a good 'chinwag'.

And Briefly . . .

. . . Strode Park and Herne Branch continue to hit new records with their stall at the annual fete at Strode Park Home for the Disabled, Herne Bay. The Branch is based at the Home and most of the members are residents there, augmented by several from the town.

Last year the Branch made £228 at the stall, one of the top half-dozen at the fete and this year hope to do even better.

. . . Huddersfield District report a busy year which included visiting Storthes Hall, serving coffee at local courts, helping hospital leagues of friends, visiting old people, distributing food parcels to the elderly and housebound at Christmas and Easter, working with residents at Cheshire Homes, helping under-privileged and one-parent families and mounting Christmas parties for local children.

simple, stumbling after 'truth and honesty' within the Christian Church and also within Toc H. It speaks to my professional training as a social worker now retired but not inactive. Finally it speaks to my frustrated liberal political beliefs in our polarised society. FACE TO FACE is for all human beings, for all Christians, for all professionals in the caring professions and for voluntary workers too and it speaks to a society which needs 'a government that understands, elected by a people that understands, and a country prepared to pay taxes necessary to establish good services for its most vulnerable members'.

The theological message is the age old one that on 'the other side of love's coin' there is a judgement and that, if God is to make us new people in a new society, there must be repentance. Frances Young has found God's judgement in Arthur's handicap and, through it, she has found an inner peace or, as she expresses it, 'a foretaste of the heavenly banquet' after years when she 'struggled . . . in utter loneliness'. In the process of her journey she has been called to ordination in the Methodist ministry — a ministry in which Arthur will have a part.

The personal and family things written about here are usually private things but we should be grateful to Frances Young that she has been able to share them. And perhaps, for me personally, there is a message to continue

my seeking hopefully in all that Frances has shared with me in these pages. You see I still cannot ignore my original reaction of shame that as we worshipped together Sunday by Sunday, I was not aware that Frances 'struggled . . . in utter loneliness'. Perhaps this must be part of my own repentance that 'I was not aware?'.

Robin Dunford

Published by Epworth Press, Price £2.95.

'CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE'

by Richard Foster

It is not every day that one picks up a spiritual book which is not geared chiefly for the religiously minded reader, so it gives me great pleasure to recommend a book which is entirely practical as well as soundly spiritual.

Left to myself I doubt I should have overcome my shyness of a somewhat austere title but the enthusiastic recommendation of a friend overcame my reluctance and I equally warmly recommend it to Toc H readers.

The opening para made me want to read further. It says 'The desperate need for today is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people' and he sets about systematically to put depth of living within anybody's reach. The chapter on 'simplicity' I found enthralling.

Hugh Potts

Hon Padre, W Mids & S Wales Region

Photo: Fleet News & Mail



Lilian Penfold and 'Chips' Chipperfield, Chairmen of Hartley Wintney Men's and Women's Branches, hand over an audiometer to local doctors in the area. The Branches jointly raised the £450 needed.



Training for retirement? Phil Blakeway (pictured left) who recently retired from International Rugby (England and Gloucester) giving a helping hand at the Leckhampton Lake project organised by the Gloucester Projects Group.

Photo: Army Information



Artistic talent among the youngsters at Verden, Germany, was well in evidence in the 'Favourite Book Character Picture Competition', held recently in the Garrison library. Toc H provided the prizes. In the picture the winners pose with their paintings, with Fred Mason, Warden of Toc H Verden.

We will Remember...

We regret to announce the death of the following members:

In February

Horace W Smith (Buckland),
Ann Thedham (Holme Valley)

In March

John Brown (Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay),
Ethel M Curtis (South East Essex
District), William Grabham (Nailsea),
Kenneth T Muir (Peterborough), Revd
Edward T Stevart (Castle Point),
Roy W Webb (Borough Green),
Beatrice W Winston (Bargoed)

In April

Thomas Bailey (Melton & Charnwood
District), Laurence Beaumont
(Huddersfield), William Birch (Cleveland
District), Revd George H T Blake
(Gloucestershire South District), William
H Boyd (Clacton-on-Sea), Winifred
Carthew (Tywardreath), Conrad Coore
(Darlington District), William J C
Freeman (Constable District), William J
Hare (Cheltenham), Denys Isherwood
(Kettering), Albert E Light (Strode Park
& Herne), Ronald G Mogridge
(Merseyside District), Clara E Morris
(Clacton Afternoon), Denis Newton
(Gravesend), Lilian E M Payne
(Salcombe), Ethel Pinnell (Wroughton),
Ernest G Ridgdon (Cambridge), Isobel
M Smith (Loughton), Florence Wellman
(Woking)

In May

John R Pierce (High Brooms), Elsie E
Toogood (Southsea).

Obituaries not previously recorded — notified on Branch Roll returns

Edward G Allen (Broadstairs & St Peters),
Charles W Ashton (Coalville), Major Gen
Sir A H 'Alec' Bishop KCMG CB CVO
OBE, (Beckley), John G Boyd (Borders
District), Percy C Bruce (Clacton-on-Sea),
Robert A Corney (Ouse & Hull District),
David H Evans (Mochdre), Hilda Evison
(Paddock), Constance O Gray
(Salcombe), Lilian F Hill (Netherall),
Hartford Horn (Clacton-on-Sea), Revd
Noel Jones (Wrexham), Nancy P
McDonald (Cardiff), Mary Muncaster
(Broughton Astley), Elsie Parsons
(Lodden Vale District), Ernest Pike
(Merseyside District), Vera D Prouse
(Bideford), Alfred F Stock (Merseyside
District), Henry Storey (Bedlington),
Mr T A Titmus (Wellingborough).

Colin Stevenson writes that Canon R H L (Bob)
Slater died in December aged 88. He joined the
staff in 1926 when still a curate at
Newcastle-upon-Tyne and was Padre of Mark
18 for three years before going to Burma as a
missionary. Later in his life he studied under
Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich in New
York, was Professor of Church History at
Huron College, and founded the Centre for the
Study of World Religions at Harvard.

Norah Austin writes that 'Mrs Mary Smith, who
died on Easter Saturday, was a very energetic
and enthusiastic member of Loughton Women's

Toc H Branch. She involved herself in all
aspects of the Branch's work. Last year she
moved from Loughton to Wiltshire and the
Branch missed her cheerful personality and
help'.

Jack Packham writes that Denis Newton was a
member for 25 years and held many offices
including Central Councillor. He was also
involved with church affairs, Samaritans and
Mission to Seamen.

The Rev George Blake, a Baptist minister, was
on the staff between 1934 and 1938, first in
Notts and Derby and subsequently in the North
Western Area. He was 84 years old.

Conrad Coore of Darlington District Branch
was for a long time a member of the
Northallerton Branch. He was much involved
with the setting up of a Toc H sponsored
association to run the Northallerton Talking
Newspaper for the Blind and was Chairman of
the Talking Newspaper Association up to his
sudden death.

Cecil Baylis writes: 'William J "Bunny" Hare
was a long service member of Toc H who was
blinded during active service in the first world
war. He nevertheless took an active interest in
Branch activities and for a number of years
served as Vice-Chairman. We will remember
him'.

Albert Light, a founder member of Strode Park
and Herne Branch, died at the age of 79.

He had been a resident at Strode Park
Home for the Disabled since 1957 where he was
noted for his superb craftsmanship in restoring
cane furniture.

He was confined to a wheelchair but
was known to many members in Thanet
District for his cheerfulness and his enthusiasm.

Emily Gloster writes: 'Florrie Wellman, a
member of Woking Ladies Branch since 1949
until the time of her death, will be sadly missed.
She had held the offices of Central Councillor,
Secretary, Jobbie and Treasurer, and was
always ready "to leap with joy to any task for
others ..."

Sandy Weldon tells us of the death of Kenny
Muir, a founder member of Peterborough
Branch in 1930, who died in April.

He was always an active member until,
owing to his wife's illness and his own failing
health, he moved to Worthing in 1978.

Lawrence Beaumont, a quiet much loved man,
was a long term member of Huddersfield
Branch, holding many offices, a good pilot and
friend who will be sadly missed.

Alf Hagger writes: 'Jack Pierce was a founder
member of the Branch which celebrated its
50th anniversary in March. He was a very
popular figure in the district, nothing was too
much trouble for him and his work was
invaluable to the Branch, especially for the
aged ... Our thoughts are with all his relatives,
especially his twin brother, Fred, who is the
Branch treasurer'.

TOC H STAFF VACANCIES

1. GENERAL SECRETARY

The important role of the General Secretary of the Movement is an opportunity
for a person of vision and faith.

Applications are sought from experienced men and women who are able to offer
leadership and inspiration coupled with administrative ability. The General
Secretary's responsibility will be for all the administrative requirements of the
Movement through department heads. The post is located at Wendover, Bucks.
Salary in the range of £10,400 to £12,200.
Closing date 19 July 1985.

2. PERSONNEL AND TRAINING OFFICER

Applications are invited from experienced men and women for this second tier
post in Toc H, responsible to the General Secretary. The post is located at
Wendover, Bucks. Salary in the range £7,375 to £10,950.
Closing date 29 July 1985.

Details and application forms from the General Secretary, Toc H Headquarters,
1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

We give thanks for their lives

Sheffield's Pavilion Project

Di Woodward
Project Administrator



This time last year, nobody thought it could really happen! The Pavilion was no more than a building, filled with broken, rejected furniture and housing families of dirt and dust-loving creatures. The garden-cum-bowling green was a haven for weeds. Today, thanks to the vision of Bill Bains, the hard work of the project team and the benefits of a competent and tireless Long Term Volunteer, John

Ames, the Pavilion has become an ongoing and very demanding project.

The aims of the Pavilion Project were centred around a desire to encourage local people to become more actively involved in their community. It was hoped that the provision of a centre where all would be welcome would facilitate this. We were very conscious of a need for something fairly permanent, that would not suddenly be taken away, and we tried to provide for areas not already being covered by other groups. An important aspect that did not seem to receive much attention was that of the family as a whole, and it was this consideration which determined many of our approaches.

The building has now been totally transformed and is well equipped with its own cooking facilities and sports equipment. It is open nearly every day for a variety of different activities. The regular events are listed below and go hand in hand with other, shorter duration, projects.

1. Coffee mornings are held once a month on a Saturday, and include the sale of books and plants.

2. The 'Generation Gap' was aimed at bridging the gap between the generations, to encourage socialising and working together in harmony. This club is held every Thursday night and activities vary, depending on the number present. We have had quizzes, games, pool, darts, snooker and a sponsor day, to name just a few.

3. The Junior Youth Club is held on Wednesday nights to cater for our 7-11 year olds, who are no longer able to attend their previous club for insurance reasons. Although this is only just beginning, we hope it will help the young feel more a part of their community.

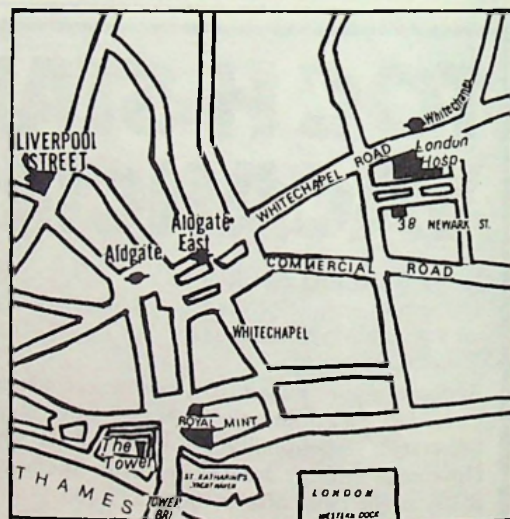
4. 'Drop-Ins' occur on two afternoons when the community are welcome to drop in for a drink and a chat.

5. 'Friends of Toc H' is a Monday afternoon get-together for both members of Toc H and all their friends, and others who might be interested in learning what we are about.

6. Youth Action Group — on Monday nights every fortnight. This group has already begun to increase in numbers and plans are in progress for future projects.

Upmarket from the Old Kent Road!

Helen Powell



Throw a three and advance to Whitechapel Road! Move on and you come to 38 Newark Street, E1 which is a new Toc H community house, opened recently in the heart of London's East End. It is a converted vicarage which will be home for seven people, and has facilities for the community. As you approach the house, it does not stand out as distinctive, blackened as it is by London soot. However, when you get

closer you can see its character. There is a plaque on the wall telling you that John Richard Green, historian of the English people, lived there from 1866 to 1869 — and no doubt many other interesting people have stayed there. In fact it is a listed building and it has many odd shaped windows and arches. On the balcony is a peep-hole through the brickwork so the vicar could see who was coming down the road to church!

How Toc H acquired the building is an interesting story. Talbot House, the big Toc H hostel standing on Tower Hill, was actually owned by the Wakefield Trust. In the 1970s the property was in poor condition and the Trust had no money to do it up. It was decided to sell the site for redevelopment with a 125 year lease. This coincided with the move in the late 1970s to close the Marks and re-open smaller community houses which

W VENTURES

We have challenged another Sheffield youth group ('The Hatters') to an indoor sports night and plans are in hand to run a mini-bus down to the Midsummer Festival at Cuddesdon, for both groups, as well as a coach for older members and the Plus Bus.

The Pavilion Project has many other activities planned for 1985. We started the year with a party for mentally handicapped children, which was great fun for all involved, and we hope to continue the contacts formed by taking the children away for a weekend in August. More recently we have taken deprived children to Colsterdale for a weekend. The volunteers for this came mostly from the two Sheffield youth groups. Despite the fact that the weather was rather wet we all had a good time, visiting various places of local interest and even managing to fit a walk in between showers. The scenery at Colsterdale is always beautiful and the children loved looking for rabbits and learning about the pheasants and the shoots. The only mishap we had was when one of the volunteers decided to slip into one of the dykes, much to everyone else's amusement, and had to squelch the rest of the way home! We completed the

Saturday with a party, lots of games and a quiz. Would you believe that the children were so tired they were actually asking to go to bed? The children certainly enjoyed themselves, as did the volunteers; and we intend to follow up this project with a get-together for parents, children and helpers, at the Pavilion, where we will revive memories of the weekend with a slide show and party.

For four days, the week before Easter, we ran a Pensioners' Playtime at the Pavilion. Food and transport were provided and there were many different types of entertainment, including Bingo. An Easter bonnet competition, a double act of poetry reading and songs and live musical entertainment for a good old sing-song. Again, the week was a huge success and we intend to visit our older friends to show them the pictures taken and renew our contacts.

Also on the cards for the Pavilion Project are more weekends away for children, single parents and their children and the handicapped. There are also numerous half and full day bus trips arranged to enable members of the community to visit different places of interest.



All in all, the Pavilion Project has taken off like a rocket (leaving most of us desperately trying to catch it) and all credit must go to those willing to give so much time and dedication to helping to steer it on its way. I, for one, hope that these wonderful beginnings will continue to help spread the Toc H ideals.

would better foster the Toc H spirit. The Wakefield Trust, on closing Talbot House, made a commitment to Toc H to purchase another property within the square mile of Tower Hill. They eventually found 38 Newark Street and work started on it in July 1984 after the lease from the Diocese of London had been signed. There was a phenomenal amount of work needed on the building — so the builders did not complete renovations until April 1985.

Toc H has been involved in the East End for a long time through Talbot House and local Branches, but more deeply through the work of Peter East, the one-time warden of Talbot House. Peter was an important part of many people's lives and work in the East End. He came to London in the 1960s and his friendship with young Bengali people started early on and resulted in the establishment of 'Number Seven', a communal residential centre for single Bangladeshi young men, at Tower Hill, next to Talbot House. Another important piece of work was the camping programme which he co-ordinated for years. Through weekend trips to various parts of Britain, hundreds of young people were introduced to new life-changing experiences. While still working in the East End Peter went on

three holiday visits to the Sylhet district of Bangladesh where he stayed in the homes of friends from London. It was those experiences and his understanding of the problems of poorer people in Bangladesh that gave him his ambition to live there for a while. A book to be published soon, called 'A Kind of Love Affair' by Kenneth Prideaux-Brune, gives a very moving account of Peter's work in the East End. *Point Three* is covering Peter's work in Bangladesh — so no more need be said here. It is clear that Peter's contribution over his many years of work in the East End will be directly relevant to the Toc H development going on there now. Before beginning to explain what will be happening at Newark Street it may be useful to describe the house, to give a clearer picture of its potential.

Thirty eight Newark Street has four floors, including a basement. The basement can be completely self contained, having its own front door and a lockable stairway up into the rest of the house. It has three utility rooms, its own kitchen and toilet. The main entrance to the house is on the ground floor. This is where the largest utility room is, which can be divided into two rooms with a partition and has a conservatory area attached. There is an office for a

development/community worker which can also double as a meeting room. The residents' area begins on the ground floor, as their kitchen and dining-room are there, and then extends completely over the first and second floors and includes seven bedrooms and a lounge. The building has an interesting layout. Although this description may have made it sound simple, it does seem like a maze of rooms at first. There are two stairways very close together, one of which used to be the servants', and this can be confusing. At the back of the house is a lovely walled area which has great potential for landscaping.

As the Toc H development/community worker I have an interesting job, which has two very closely linked areas of work, the house and the local community. I have the job of establishing the community house, so I will be working closely with the residents, helping them to sort out problems, guiding them, and generally being available to them. The other side of my work is in the community, to find out what is going on in the area and what needs there are, meeting and talking with local workers and local people. Already I have met some lovely people, many of whom know Peter. Although a great deal of work is

The Challenge from Durham

by Ken Prideaux-Brune

Who would have thought it? Who could have imagined, just one short year ago, that theological disputation would become front page news? Christianity may be declining in numbers and influence but a bishop who publicly casts doubt on traditional dogmas still rates headlines in our secular press. The story of David Jenkins and his theological views seems to run and run.

But what precisely is the story? Is it just amusement at the sight of a storm in an ecclesiastical teacup disturbing the complacent? Is it nostalgia for the imagined certainties of past ages? Or does it reveal a latent hunger for the transcendent, a genuine search for meaning, in people apparently secularised? Does it, in other words, provide an opportunity for the discussion of life's deeper questions?

I have to start by recognising my own bias which stems from the fact that those who have been most helpful to me in developing my religious understanding have been those who have been willing to share their doubts, not those who have been willing to share only their certainties. One of the most important books for me was John Robinson's *Honest to God*, not because of anything it said but because it suggested that religion was not a package which had to be accepted or rejected as a whole. It was possible to remain part of a community of faith despite large areas of doubt, even of disbelief. And it was that which enabled me, however slowly and inadequately, to grow in faith rather than rejecting the whole elaborate edifice, as I was close to doing. For me, therefore, the Bishop of Durham's honest sharing of his views is positive and helpful.

However, I believe it raises issues far deeper and more important than the literal truth of the Virgin Birth or the

bodily Resurrection of Jesus — or, for that matter, the right of a bishop to speak his own mind rather than the mind of the Church. It raises issues about the nature of religious truths and the ways in which they can be expressed. It raises issues about the nature, and the limitations, of historical truth.

Christianity, unlike Hinduism, is an historical religion. It is based on events which happened at a particular time and place. The myths of the Hindu religion are not believed to be literally true; they are stories which point to profound religious truth. And the Christian stories are not only historical accounts; they are also myths which point to ultimate truth. Their importance lies in this mythic quality.

The Christian myths, in other words, unlike the Hindu myths, are on two levels. On one level are the facts recorded in the accounts of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. On the other level are the deep meanings which those facts convey. If the stories of Jesus were simply invented the truths about God and man which they contain would still be true. Nonetheless, much of the power of the Christian religion springs from the fact that these deep truths are not expressed in fictional stories about an ideal man but in factual accounts of a real, individual human being, who lived in a particular place at a particular time. The great truths about God and man are not just abstractions but are given concrete expression in a human life.

So, the historical level of the Christian myths cannot be dismissed as unimportant. But here we encounter a difficulty. It seems clear that the primary concern of the writers of the Gospels was not the accurate reporting of historical facts but the effective transmission of

what they believed to be the profound truths revealed by the events they described. And what, in any event, is historical truth? Can we be sure of the literal truth even of reports of yesterday's news? The BBC claims to report events impartially yet is regularly accused of bias by both the political left and the political right. Where, then, does truth lie in accounts of events 2,000 years ago? There is, surely, overwhelming evidence for Jesus as an historical personage, for the reality of his life and death, and for the existence of events, whatever they were, which transformed the demoralised and frightened disciples into people who were convinced that that death, in some mysterious way, was not the end. But when we come to the details of the Gospel narratives who is to say where truth lies?

We Westerners are brought up to believe in the supremacy of our reason. We are taught that the application of scientific method and rational argument can give us accurate facts about the world in which we live. Yet there are whole areas of life which science cannot illuminate. There are truths more profound than the facts of science or history. Our obsession with historical facts — were 5,000 people actually fed with five loaves and two small fishes and was Jesus actually born in a stable? — can all too easily blind us to the deeper poetic truths which such myths contain. I believe it is of that, above all, that the Bishop of Durham is reminding us.

Take, for example, the story of the birth in a stable. We can so easily get bogged down in arguments about its literal truth that we forget the profound poetic truth which it conveys. Indeed one might almost say that whether or not the story is literally true is irrelevant. It doesn't matter. What matters is the truth which

TWO NEW VENTURES

contd from p9

going on in the Borough of Tower Hamlets, there are huge areas of need which are only just beginning to be tackled. There has been a lot of work with the different ethnic minorities and many feel that it is now time for more multicultural provision. This is one area that Toc H could work in — and this would be completely in line with the 1985 Development Policy of Toc H.

The two sides of my work come together in the house where I will be working with the residents to use the resources at the house to meet needs in the area. This could mean that any number of things could be happening there. It might be

right to run a multicultural youth club, or set up a befriending scheme in which we find volunteers to visit elderly people living in the locality. I hope that we will run some multicultural weekends for Toc H volunteers and local people, where we could share our mixture of cultures and beliefs. In fact, anything could happen!

The house is an exciting and challenging new area of Toc H development. With a small nucleus of people we will be able to involve more people in Toc H, and in so doing involve more Toc H people in the area. Toc H is not about blind acts of charity; it is about taking the time to build relationships with people, and this is what we will be all about.

The philosophy of the house will be in living the Four Points of the Compass. Community house living involves commitment to the group or 'family' — and so first and foremost, the residents make a commitment to one another, to live, share and grow together, testing out their beliefs through daily living. With the Toc H commitment is the important additional commitment to the community.

It's impossible to say in detail what will be happening at the house. What is clear is that visitors will be assured of a welcome and a cup of tea in the true Toc H spirit — and will probably spend much more time there than intended. You have been warned!

the writer was trying to convey – that the all-powerful God can be truly pictured as a helpless baby born in a stable. That insight into the humility of God is so extraordinary, so mindblowing, that it can only be expressed in such a metaphor.

When we are trying to talk about God we are talking about something – someone – completely inexpressible. Our understanding is inadequate. The words don't exist. And the only way we can hope to grasp or to convey something of the Divine reality is through poetry, through metaphor, through myth. If we are to hear what poetry has to say to us we must lay aside our Western literal-mindedness, our rational devotion to material facts, and allow ourselves to enter the world conjured up by the magic of the words. Concentration on the merely material breaks the poet's spell and dissolves the magic. The intuitive world is real, too.

When reading a passage advertised as poetry we don't usually have this problem. When we were at school many of us, I suppose, had to learn by heart Wordsworth's poem on daffodils, in which he says that they were '*fluttering and dancing in the breeze*'. We don't stop to ask if the daffodils were really dancing or to enquire whether it was a waltz or a tango. We know that the poet is using a metaphor to create, in the only way he knows how, a picture in our minds of the action of the breeze on the flowers.

The language of religion is not only the language of history and philosophy; it is also the language of poetry. Intuition is restored to its proper place, spirit speaks to spirit in myth and metaphor creating flickering images of the transcendent, like reflections in moving water, which we grasp, lose and then grasp again. These '*puzzling reflections in a mirror*', as St Paul called them, are religion. Take away the poetry and the myth, these intimations of the inexpressible, and what is left? Merely a few shards of historical fact for scholars to argue over, lacking any power to stir the soul.

The Bishop of Durham is, I believe, encouraging us to seek to grasp the profound poetic truths embedded in the Christian myths. Are we prepared to respond to that challenge? Or will we continue simply to argue about the historic truth of the Gospel narratives? Will we raise our heads in the hope of catching a glimpse of mountain peaks through the swirling mists or bury our ostrich heads, bickering, in the sand? Can we transcend our craving for certainty and look for the profounder truths to be glimpsed, by those with the courage to seek them, in the '*puzzling reflections in a mirror*'?

Personality Point

The following new members were registered during April and May:

Mrs Sheila M Cooper, Mrs Joan Cope, Mrs Alice Henshall, Mrs Doris Owens, Mrs Matilda J Taylor, Mrs Marjorie Wright, (Crewe & North Staffs District); Mrs Iris J Bingham, Mrs Linda J Newell, Mrs Phyllis M Roberts, (Bala W); Mrs Marguerite Hampton, Peter P Hampton, Revd Anthony R Brant, (Bognor Regis J); Miss Enid M Nurse, Mrs Margaret A Jones, Mrs Joyce Kyte, (Treforest W Group); Mrs Gertrude Cook, Mrs Nella Sykes, (Cheltenham J); Mrs Williamina McLellan, Mrs Mabel Robertson, (Coupar Angus J); Harry W Heathcote, Eric Taylor, (Seaford J); Ric Dejonckneere, Bart Pattyn, (Tubby's Poperinge J Group); Miss J Grainger, (Ashby-de-la-Zouch W); Mrs Brenda Gould, (Bangor J); Miss Mary E Helme, (Central J); Alan J Higgs, (Cirencester M), Revd Peter A Bird (Medway & Sheppey District); Mrs Vera Harvey, (Nailsea W); Robert Carslaw, (Newcastle West J); Peter A Hill, (Porlock M); David W Hawton, (Portsmouth J Group); Mrs Elsie M Cross, (Swannington W); Geoffrey A Moore, (Tyneside/Wearside District); Albert A Heffernan, (White Horse Vale District).

A warm welcome to 35 new members

Farewell



to the Rev Malcolm B ('Polly') Perkins, who leaves the staff at the end of June. Polly, who comes originally from Nottingham, joined the staff in 1973 and has been a SE Regional Padre for the past 12 years. Over the past few years he has spent part of his time working for the Carr-Gomm Society as a Regional Organiser, and has involved Toc H members in work with homeless people. His colleagues and local members will miss his guidance and support, and the adrenalin-pumping excitement of travelling as a passenger in his car! As one colleague lovingly put it, 'He doesn't so much drive a car, he aims and fires!'.

Congratulations!



to The Very Reverend The Lord MacLeod of Fuinary, a President of Toc H, on his 90th birthday on 17 June.

to Donna Gibbs (LTV, Southern Region) on her recent engagement to David Wright.

to Rev Colin Huw Gibbs, ordained priest on 29 June at St Asaph Cathedral. Huw served as Toc H PRO for a number of years.

to Lily Philpot of Darlington District Branch who has been presented with the gift of Maundy Money by the Queen at the annual ceremony, which was in Ripon this year. Lily is a long term member of Toc H, belonging first to the Richmond, N Yorks Women's Branch and then the District Branch. She was for many years a missionary in New Zealand and is a keen church worker.

to John Daly, who, on 1 May celebrated the 50th anniversary of his consecration as a bishop with a special service at All Hallows. Bishop John came to ordination through Toc H and, at his own request, was consecrated bishop at All Hallows. He was only 32 at the time. He served successively as Bishop of Gambia, of Ghana and of Korea and the packed congregation at his service of thanksgiving included many representatives of these dioceses as well as of Toc H and All Hallows. The preacher was Sam van Culin, a former chaplain to the Winant Volunteers, now Secretary-General of the Anglican Consultative Council.

Open Forum

Greenham Common

The May edition of *Point Three* was received as usual with interest. I should like to say that it struck me that the article about Greenham Common was unusual.

I agree that those who advocate nuclear disarmament are entitled to their views. But I can remember two wars and that in the years before the last war Hitler was led to believe that his plans could be successful. The cost in lives was dreadful – the tragedy being that it could have been avoided.

At a time when VE Day celebrations are being attended, would it not be a good idea to publish an article giving a sensible view of an adequate defence policy, which might give your younger readers a chance to form a moderate opinion about the problem?

John Randell
Belmont

The two articles by Isobel Bowles and Helen Ellison in the May number of *Point Three* provide an excellent background for a serious consideration of the most difficult, urgent, and critical problem of our time. Isobel Bowles is chiefly concerned to share her experience of Greenham Common and the impact the contrast with the air base has made upon her. It is very telling and impressive, not least because she provides a corrective to some of the tendentious reports of the media.

The article by Helen Ellison is more abstract and argumentative, seeking mainly to justify the present stockpiling and manufacture of nuclear armaments. The attempt to do this in moral terms is a mammoth task from which she does not flinch, but in doing so she eventually flounders in a sea of moral confusion. A case based on the Latin tag 'Si vis pacem, para bellum' is no longer tenable. Equally so it is simply trite to repeat the oft quoted statement 'that we all want peace'.

There will be agreement with her assertion that there is little virtue in simply being against nuclear war (it reminds one of the country rector who declared himself openly to be against sin) – in fact there is no virtue at all in being 'against' anything in that sense. Rightly she goes on to say that we must try to prevent it and then the astounding statement comes that the *only* truly moral approach to nuclear war is to deter it. Furthermore the moral way to avoid nuclear war is to acquire nuclear weapons. If you wish for peace prepare for war!

The attempt to reach a constructive stance on moral grounds

is to place ourselves in a false situation. The moral argument can continue among Christians and others of goodwill endlessly and inconclusively. It is in any case a second-level argument about something which should be decided at a deeper level. To maintain that if we do not rid ourselves of nuclear weapons we shall destroy the whole of humanity as we know it is another second-level argument.

Having come to the conclusion that the cessation of the manufacturing and sale of armaments is imperative, it would seem that disarmament is not only desirable but essential. In coming to this decision I have to admit that I am not a politician, not a defence expert, nor a moral philosopher, nor a humanitarian. It is not in the background of any of these that my conviction is based but rather on a steady, deep and arduous attempt to understand the very nature of life itself as a gift of God.

It is not possible to grow in wholeness of being, living in union with God and with all beings and at the same time share in the deliberate destruction of all life. This goes for an individual and for a community as well. Then there is the fact for Christians that God has shown us in Christ the true way of life, a way which demands the fullest exercise of love and therefore the rejection of violence in any form. This is a conviction which does not arise from a consideration of various approaches to the problem, but out of the depths of contemplative and searching silence and sober thought.

There is another aspect of this situation which can be seen in the work of the physicist Fritjof Capra, whereby it becomes clear that we are one world not only in terms of human relationships, but in the totality of our environment. There is a state of internal balance and co-operation in the cellular constitution of all forms of life and if we continue to exploit or disturb this balance we may destroy life altogether. Creativeness, co-operation, and balance would appear to be built-in elements of life and are self-authenticating. Toc H is surely fully aware of all this because in the shortest terms we are considering and are concerned with the building of the Kingdom of God.

Revd David Worth
Stroud

Chairmen and Secretaries

West Sussex and Thanet Districts had a most enjoyable weekend at Cuddesdon recently. During question time a discussion took place regarding Keith

Rea's article in the April issue of *Point Three* 'Are Chairmen and Secretaries obsolescent?'.

The consensus of opinion of members from various Branches was that all four jobs had served the Movement extremely well and each post was vital to the smooth running of Branches as they are composed at present. A change in name would not alter the requirements of the job.

A Chairman carefully thinks out the form of the meeting and sets the whole tone. The Secretary is essential to inform members of what is going on and forwarding their wishes and opinions. The Jobbie gets on with arrangements of work to be done and the Treasurer ensures the financial backing is forthcoming from the members. The very important position of Pilot is to lead and inspire the Branch to carry out their activities within the framework of the Four Points of the Compass.

If the Movement wishes to change, and not meet in Branches as at present, it may not necessarily need these offices, but if the original ideals of Toc H are to be continued, some organisation will be needed. New young members of Toc H will probably decide upon the form that suits them best, but if they are not very careful they may have an organisation, which, however well intentioned, bears very little similarity to the original concept of Toc H.

Elsie Witchett
Ilford

Toc H in Gibraltar

How pleasant to read in April *Point Three* of the continued activity of Jock Brown despite the 'wisdom' of our Movement.

I met him in 1943 in San Severo, Italy, when he was in charge of the Toc H canteen there. There was a succession of power cuts then, all day and every day, and we drank our cups of tea by the light of hand-made diesel oil lamps. The canteen was approached from the road by a sort of stone causeway, to either side of which was a sea of mud, and at night during the power cuts good navigation was essential.

After a few weeks I was posted from there, and I did not return until December 1944 by which time Jock too, had been posted, and although the canteen operated in the name of Toc H, a Salvation Army lady was now in charge.

Jock had however left his mark. A reading room, a games room and a chapel had been set up, on lines characteristic of the Old House, and a 'Toc H Circle' met there every week. The chapel was beautifully furnished and

Opinions expressed in these columns (including any editorial comment) are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement. We reserve the right to edit letters. Only letters carrying the correspondent's full name and address will be considered for publication.

volunteers conducted a Service every Sunday. The Toc H Circle saw my first real contact with the Movement, and somewhere I have a card to prove that I joined in 1945. The canteen was a meeting place for all sorts and conditions of men including British, American, New Zealand, Polish and South African.

Nelson Parker
Rushden

Five-Minute Weekend

Well not exactly, but the following is based on a five-minute resume by a Central Councillor at one of the Consultation Weekends. This one was at Alison House, Derbyshire from 12-14 April. It was organised and led by Colin Rudd and John Mitchell. There were 17 Councillors present and Alan Brooke attended for the CEC.

Most of us spent the warm sunny Saturday afternoon exploring the beautiful countryside around Cromford, where Toc H have this idyllic centre. For the rest of the weekend we did not notice the weather as we were busy exploring in some depth the work of Central Councillors. As a means of learning we adopted the word 'hypothetical' and lived the life of a Central Councillor. In 'role play' we visited a Branch before Council; formulated resolutions; learned the skills of the debating chamber, and how to use the microphone to best effect when proposing or seconding a motion; and then in five-minutes each, two Councillors, after group discussion, showed two ways of reporting back to the Branches which elected them.

It was a very interesting and worthwhile exercise both for new and older hands alike. The arguments Councillors put forward were well

reasoned and it was hard to realise that in many instances were completely opposite from the opinions they held. Perhaps this was a good thing as the motions before the mock Council show. In one of these we, as Central Council, rejected a move to change the name of Toc H to one more relevant to these times, and in another directed the CEC to move Headquarters from Wendover to Birmingham! To give us a wider horizon we were also able to question people who were actually doing the jobs. To see how HQ ticks: The role and function of the CEC: Hear from a Councillor about the formation and growth of a new young people's group in St Albans, and see how a Sheffield youth club and Project leader does that task. Oh, and much, much more. If your Councillor didn't attend one of these weekends this year, then try to make sure s/he does next time. We all agreed that we would do all we could to make such a thing a regular feature of Toc H training in the future.

Ted Hulatt
Costessey

50 years of books

I have just been reading about '50 years of books' (Oldham Toc H) in the March edition of *Point Three*. I was very interested as I ran the Hospital Library at Chatham for my local Branch of Toc H for over 20 years. After the old folks in the hospital were sent to a recently opened old people's home, I followed them and with the help of the County Hospital Librarian opened a library there which I ran every week for over 12 years. Another Toc H Branch took over from me.

L Greenwood
Gillingham

Edith House

May I thank the kind person who sent an anonymous donation of £50 for Edith House, here in Winchester. This gift has enabled us to send our three-seater settee for repair and recovering, and we are most grateful.

Edith House continues its work, and we are expecting two new babes in June. Since November 1983, ten girls have had the space and time to sort out their lives, have their babes in a happy and loving atmosphere, and work out their relationships. As a consequence, one of the first three residents will be marrying in May, and we have the promise of three more weddings next year. One battered wife has returned to her husband.

In the House they find time, love and care and it does work. As one of them has said, 'I thought this was a hostel, and didn't want to come. Now I wish I had come sooner because it is home for me'. Thank you to all who help us and especially to those in our own Region who faithfully collect money-off vouchers and baby clothes.

Margery Knight
Winchester

Thank you . .

May I express my sincere thanks to all those members and colleagues in Toc H for their messages of sympathy following the recent death of my wife. I am very appreciative of their support at this time and this only goes to show how much this Movement of ours is what it claims to be -- 'a family'.

John R Morgan
Ruislip



The Macmillan Cancer Relief Fund's Gillingham Committee, founded by Toc H, celebrates its 25th birthday, and Toc H members are still fully involved, including Fred Lewis (front left).



High Brooms Men's 50th Anniversary Service. (See Round and About.)

INTRODUCTION TO TOC H

We print two articles below which both say something about the way people, especially young people, come into Toc H. Harold Barnes asks whether we accept people into membership too readily, and lightly, and without preparing them. He cites examples of Toc H Youth Groups which have little 'Toc H' in them. Lest readers feel this is always the case, we include an essay from a past participant in a Toc H youth group. She wrote it in 1980, as a homework task, and then found it again five years later as she sorted out her belongings prior to her wedding.

Is it too easy today? by Harold Barnes

Today we have a Movement that does not always appear to be moving either far or fast. Who is to blame for this state of affairs? As we are a Membership Movement, supposedly controlled through the Members themselves, I presume the blame can therefore only be placed on our shoulders. Unfortunately we do not always accept this fact, and try to pass the buck along the line so that we can later sit back and say 'I told you so'. What we should be doing is to think about how our Membership has changed with the years.

We can all remember the names of some of the past 'greats' in Toc H, (or at least have read of them); those who helped in the formation of the Movement and its ideals. Do we recall though the way or the method of getting others to join? As I see it, it was this early group which set the basic example of the so-called Toc H 'way of life'. This in itself used to be the phrase used whenever we were asked 'what is Toc H?'. The answer being 'a way of life following Christian principles'. The very basis of our reason for being, you might think, but is it still being applied today? That is your decision, not mine.

The great majority of our early Members followed the example set by the founders, and they found that way of life suited them. Others saw what was happening and decided it might suit them also; but as I know from a member of nearly 60 years standing, it was not made too easy for them to actually become full Members. Let me summarise his experience: In late 1920 he first heard of the 'Human Zoo', ie Toc H, and following his initial contact he was later taken to one of the Manchester Marks — (for new Members, these were residential Houses scattered throughout the country, but now sadly disbanded). He kept up his contact and joined in their activities, but gradually became disappointed in that nobody asked him to actually join. He could not understand this at all, and

started to think that Toc H were 'clannish', and were too choosy. He therefore set out to prove his worth so that he would be asked to join, but to no avail. It was only in early 1927 whilst he was staying in another Mark that he happened to pick up a Membership Form, and read for the first time at the bottom of the form words like 'You will not be asked to become a Member of Toc H. This is your job'. He now knew the answer to his past years of waiting. On 1 September 1927 he was made a full Member, so he served nearly six years of probation, but he has never regretted the time thus spent as it only strengthened his determination to play a full part in the life within Toc H.

The example I have just given only goes to show how things have changed over the years, and not really for the better to my way of thinking. This was brought home to me a few years ago when, as District Chairman, I paid a visit unannounced to a new Group which had been recently formed and was supposedly making great strides. When I arrived I found about 20 young people sat around under what seemed to be the Chairmanship of a member of Staff, but this could just as easily have been a meeting of any Youth Club anywhere. Very little was said about Toc H and its aims, and the emphasis of the meeting seemed purely self-enjoyment. You may think that this was no bad thing, but surely if a Group is formed under the Toc H name it should try and work accordingly. Towards the end of the meeting the Chairman asked if everyone had Membership cards, and several said 'No'. Cards were then handed out and completed, but no Membership Forms were to be seen anywhere. This disgusted me, as not one of them had any idea what Toc H was or what it entailed. These young folk simply became paper members and I am not sorry to say that the ink on that paper faded for the majority. But in fairness I must say that for one or two of them the words must still have been legible because, after a lapse of years, there is once again a stirring of interest in Toc H. Perhaps now we can get a nucleus together of those few (now a bit older and maybe wiser) and start afresh, but this time with better guidance.

I wonder how often in the recent years similar things have happened? Surely quality of Membership is better than quantity; but a combination would be far better. We all have various thoughts and ideas, but as I said at the start we are a Membership Movement and therefore we should find a way to improve our Movement ourselves. This can only start at Group and Branch levels, for it is there that any impact (or lack of it) we have within our local communities takes place. The next time any of you visit a strange town, walk into the Police Station or Library and ask where the nearest Toc H meeting is held. Unless you are very lucky you will be met with a blank stare and no firm reply. Whose fault is this, would you say?!

From what I have said you will gather that I think we accept people for Membership too readily, but that at the same time we do not prepare those same people to be ready to accept Membership. To coin a phrase 'By our example shall we be known, but at the same time our example should be an example of what we might expect from others'. This might sound too much to expect, but surely if anybody hopes to become a Member, they should be prepared to meet the qualifications laid down in the Four Points so often quoted and which are the very bedrock of our reason for existence. I say that we should not let our standards slip, or we will simply become just another organisation.

To summarise my thoughts, I would suggest that our being Members in good standing can be shown under the following headings (providing of course that we do not live a life of deception to ourselves):

1. We have a desire to join
2. We have a will to join
3. We are prepared to serve a term of probation
4. We accept our commitment on taking Membership
5. We live up to that commitment afterwards

If we and future Members can accept these categories, we should be able to ensure that Toc H will still be around and having an impact in the future. So what do you think? *Is it too easy today?*

The Appeal of my Favourite Interest

Besides being interested in and deriving a great deal of pleasure from pastimes such as cooking, dressmaking, swimming and reading the occasional novel, I would say a great deal of my free time is spent involved in voluntary work as I am a member of a Toc H youth action group. This involvement has increased over the past few years and could now most definitely be classed as my favourite and certainly most demanding interest.

Before continuing I think it is necessary at this point to give a very brief definition of Toc H and try to explain what it is. The Movement, as it is now known, was started during the First World War by a man called Tubby Clayton who opened the first ever centre or refuge, as it was then, called Talbot House in Poperinghe, Belgium. This name was soon reduced to the initials T H and then the habit of spelling words out during signalling by telephone seemed to stick and the place became known as Toc H. It was the friendship, companionship and creation of an understanding among people of all backgrounds and beliefs which inspired and influenced so many people's lives and which built the Movement up into what it is today. I think there can be no background more suitable for the basis of a general charity which nowadays provides challenging opportunities for people to test the relevance of practical Christianity.

The history sounds simple enough but where exactly do I come into it (not fitting into the category of an ex-serviceman from the First World War!)? Today many new groups are being set up, such as my own local group, involving many young people who are reviving what was almost a dying

organisation. Such groups exist up and down the country where they undertake charity work of all types. Examples may include playschemes for children, holidays for the mentally and physically handicapped, work in hospitals, conservation projects and fund raising of all descriptions. I have been a member of such a group for a good two years now and during that time I have gained some of the most valuable and rewarding experiences of my life. I think what is also important is that I have enjoyed all that I have done and on several occasions cannot recall ever having been so happy or satisfied...

... Having raised the necessary funds, the next task is to organise ways of spending it. Over the past couple of years we have arranged a coach trip to the seaside on a sunny summer's day taking about 40 (or as many as possible) children with us. The children have all been from orphanages and recommended from the NCH. The afternoon at the seaside has been followed by a party-type tea of sandwiches, crisps, jelly and cakes, very kindly prepared for us by another Toc H group in that particular Region. No expenses were spared and the children seem to have thoroughly enjoyed themselves on each occasion. For us, as a group, we all agreed it was an extremely rewarding way of expending any conceivable energy we thought we had at the beginning of the day. It made a deep hole in our bank account but it's a wonderful way to spend money and see lots of others happy besides yourself. We hope to do the same sort of thing next year - funds permitting! At Christmas we have held parties for spastic children. It is a difficult task trying to think of games that a child in a wheelchair can play. We coped though and once again, even though the children could not express their happiness or thanks to us themselves, we were convinced our efforts had been a success. We have also undertaken charity work such as digging gardens for old ladies,

painting and decorating houses, visiting geriatrics in hospital and helping out the NCH with flag days and door to door collections. Many of our undertakings seem thankless jobs, but I personally, and I know others will agree with me, feel that time spent achieving something, even if it is not always for personal gain, is time well spent.

It can be argued, I know, that many of the rewards I find in Toc H membership can be found in lots of other charities or organisations. I would tend to disagree with this statement. A group such as the group I belong to functions not from a leader or a qualified figurehead. What makes it so unique and appealing to me is that all our activities are devised and organised by us. We make all the arrangements and everything is extremely formal. There are no fixed events. We decide ourselves on a project and then hopefully complete it when we have raised enough money and found a suitable date. Our meetings are very casual and the atmosphere is relaxed. I have made a whole host of new friends since I joined and I have also met some really interesting and surprising characters during my travels.

Yes, I would certainly agree with anyone claiming Toc H is a way of life. I can understand how it can be. It has so much to offer - besides group membership it has weekend projects all over the country and summer projects working away from home with underprivileged children, old people, mentally or physically handicapped people and even projects designed for conservation of bird sanctuaries. It can prove a full time occupation if you want it to be. I have found my involvement to be so rewarding and satisfying over the past couple of years that I am definitely committed for life.

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Small Ads

Small advertisements must be received (with remittance) five weeks before publication day, which is the 23rd of the preceding month. The charge is 5p a word (minimum 50p) plus VAT, to Point Three Magazine. Rates of display advertisements can be obtained from the Editorial Office, Toc H, 1 Forest Close, Wendover. Telephone: 0296 623911.

Conwy. Dinner and B & B £10.50 per day. Weekends, midweek bookings. Ideal for walking, touring, near sea and mountains. Doreen and Bill Baxter, Llys Gwilym Guest House, 3 Mountain Road, Cadnant Park, Conwy, Gwynedd, N Wales. Tel: 049 263 2351.

Jaywick, Clacton, Essex. Sea wall chalet, ideal for two adults, can sleep three. Car parking available, near shops. All electric. April to October £30 pw. Apply: Miss Nicholls, 38 Kings Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex.

Raise funds quickly, easily. Superb ball-pens, combs, key fobs, diaries, etc gold stamped to your requirements. Details: Northern Novelties, Bradford BD1 3HE.

Forthcoming Events

Frank Topping, our National Chaplain, will be returning to 'Pause for Thought' on Radio 2 in the autumn. Starting on 9 September, Frank will be broadcasting for the next 13 weeks with a series of meditations. These Monday morning broadcasts are transmitted at 8.45am and repeated the following morning at 6.15am.

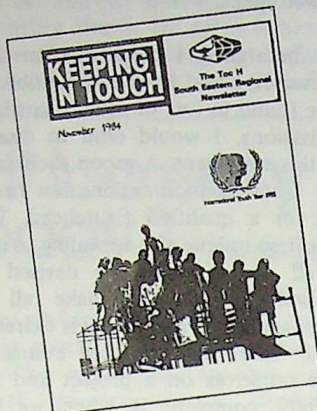
Michaelmas Quiet Weekend

27-29 September at Cuddesdon House

Come to Cuddesdon to be quiet, reflect on the deeper issues in Toc H and get a new perspective. This weekend is especially for novices who want a stronger dimension of the spirit in their daily living.

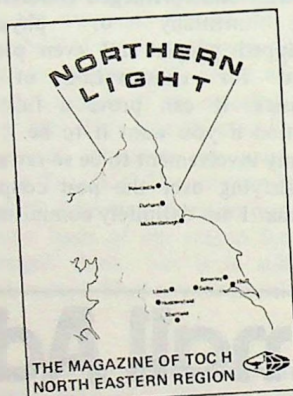
The leader will be Revd Bob Knight. The cost will be £25. You can reserve a place by writing to: Miss Christine McCaskie, Toc H HQ, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

Regional magazines and news



'Keeping in Touch' is the magazine of the South Eastern Region, which contains news, views, information and events. Many articles are of general interest and most advertised activities are open to anyone from anywhere, so please read it and 'keep in touch'.

It is produced (roughly) three times per year, and a year's subscription is £1, (cheques payable to Toc H). Subs with name and address to: Tim Day, Keeping in Touch, 3 Mount Drive, Park Street, St Albans, Herts AL2 2NP.



'Northern Light' covers a wide area from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to Hull and Sheffield. Its main object is communication between Branches, and an exchange of information and ideas on projects and fundraising. If this information is good it should also stimulate. As with any family it is important to know what other members are doing; that they are fit and healthy and equally important to know if they are not and support can be given. Northern Light is published quarterly at a cost of 10p per copy. Material for inclusion to be with the Editor by 15 April, July, October and January. The Editor is: Jenny Balmain, 2a Kaffir Road, Edgerton, Huddersfield, W Yorks HD2 2AN.

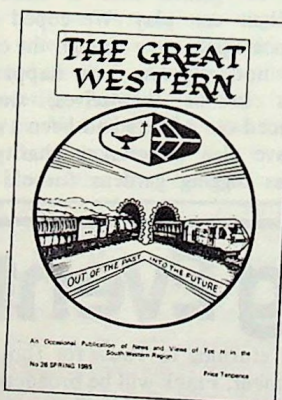
Published by Toc H, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6BT and printed by The Chesham Press Ltd, Chesham, Bucks.

'Tag Rag' is produced quarterly with the aim of keeping TAGs, volunteers and other groups in touch with what is going on in Toc H, regionally and nationally. It also aims to keep Branches in touch with what the younger folk are up to. It usually contains some form of discussion on Toc H matters, and is also publicity material for schools, youth groups. Cost 50p annually plus 50p for postage. Editor: Di Woodward, 116 Carterknowle Road, Sheffield, S Yorks S7 2DZ, who always welcomes articles, poems and news.



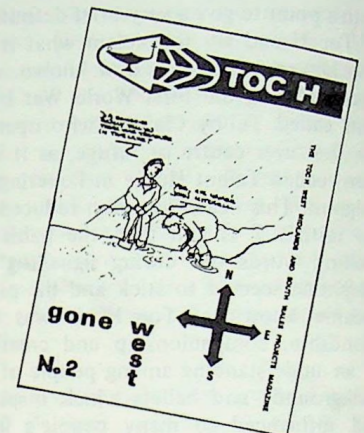
'Southern Comfort' is the magazine of the Southern Region. It appears in March, June and November, price 10p. The Editor is Carol Button, 25 Downham Mead, Chippenham, Wilts SN15 3LN. A year's supply can be sent by mail for 65p to include postage.

Each issue has a theme (the current issue has 'Witnessing Humbly, the Dimension of the Spirit') and contributions on the theme are welcomed, as well as other items of news, events etc. There is also a 'guest' article from another Region.



'The Great Western' the magazine of the South Western Region, is published in Spring and Autumn, price 10p. The Editor is Constance Beazley, 23 Henleaze Park Drive, Bristol BS9 4SB.

Its main purpose is to keep members informed of what is happening in the Region and to provide a medium for views, ideas and concerns, both inside Toc H and without. It is also a useful publicity tool. No contribution is refused, and editing is kept to a minimum.



'Gone West' is the magazine for younger people engaged in projects in the West Midlands and South Wales Region, and is supplied free to them and Branches. It appears three times a year, all being well, and covers project news, but also has items on wider Toc H issues.

The Editor is Sharon Wheeler, 16 Giffard Way, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Glos GL53 0PP, who begs people to send her letters and articles.

'The West Midlands and South Wales Regional Bulletin' is produced several times a year, when needed, and is an exchange of information, news and opinions. It is free to Branches in the Region and to individuals by special arrangement. The Editor is George Lee, The School House, Tanworth-in-Arden, Solihull, West Midlands B94 5AJ, who always welcomes contributions.

'The Mid Eastern Newsletter', produced quarterly, is a free issue to all Branches in the Mid Eastern Region, and to individuals by special arrangement.

It is an information exchange and it includes articles, reports and forthcoming events. The Editor is Mary Carmichael, 4 St Leonards Court, 166 Victoria Park Road, Leicester LE2 1XR, who is always happy to receive articles and news items.